DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 396 068 CE 070 116

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TITLE Determining the Need for Vocational Counselling among Different Target Groups of Young People under 28 Years of Age in European Community. Vocational Guidance Needs of Homeless Young People in the Netherlands--Young Drifters. National Report.
INSTITUTION European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Berlin (Germany).
PUB DATE Feb 93
NOTE 57p.; For related documents, see CE 070 114-121 and CE 071 474-475.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Counseling; *Career Guidance; *Counseling Services; Disadvantaged Youth; *Educational Needs; Education Work Relationship; Foreign Countries; *Homeless People; Individual Characteristics; Information Needs; Information Utilization; Literature Reviews; National Surveys; Needs Assessment; Program Effectiveness; Research Needs; Youth Opportunities
IDENTIFIERS *Netherlands; *Transients

ABSTRACT

A study examined the vocational guidance needs of young drifters and homeless people in the Netherlands. Available literature on the following topics was reviewed: accessibility and scope of guidance services in the Netherlands, characteristics and guidance needs of young drifters in the Netherlands, and the European dimension in vocational guidance. It was concluded that educational and vocational guidance has only a limited effect because of inadequate understanding of how the process of choice operates in young people. It was further concluded that more systematic research is needed to determine how young people use information and how they approach the labor market. Quantitative studies examining the following topics areas were deemed especially necessary: the information and vocational guidance needs of youths between the ages of 12 and 16 years; the relationship between the socioeconomic background and future prospects (especially study and career options) of young people in the Netherlands; and the actors influencing the vocational and educational choices of young people. (The bibliography lists 13 references. Excerpts from two related newspaper articles are appended.) (MN)

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Determining the need for vocational counselling among different target groups of young people under 28 years of age in the European Community

Vocational guidance needs of homeless young people in the Netherlands - Young drifters -

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Determining the need for vocational counselling among different target groups of young people under 28 years of age in the European Community

Vocational guidance needs of homeless young people in the Netherlands
- Young drifters -

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February 1993

1st edition, Berlin 1994

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The Centre was established by Regulation (EEC) No 337/75 of the Council of the European Communities.

National report 3

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

Berlin: CEDEFOP - European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training, 1994

1st edition, Berlin 1994

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Printed in Germany

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Preface by CEDEFOP

In developing the careers of young people and integrating them into working life, career guidance is becoming increasingly important. Persistent, structurally-caused unemployment, higher qualification requirements, complex training paths with eased transition between initial and continuing training, the increasing deregulation of the labour market and the emergence of new values and life styles among young people present career guidance services, as the instrument for regulating supply and demand on training, education and labour markets, with fundamental and complex tasks. At the same time, European integration poses new challenges to the career guidance services in the Member States. The PETRA 3 programme has taken an initial step in this direction through setting up European-oriented national resource centres, through organizing transitional continuing training courses for occupational guidance counsellors and publishing the "European Manual for Occupational Guidance Counsellors".

The comparative studies[1] carried out by CEDEFOP and Task Force: Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth to support and monitor work in this field have increased transparency in national occupational guidance systems and qualification structures.

The activities and research work carried out aimed primarily to make proposals or provide support for improving occupational guidance activities, to focus such work in a European context on the basis of existing national structures. Counselling requirements were deduced from existing or forecasted demand (enquiries at guidance services) or from general data derived from labour market and occupational research.

To date the needs of various target groups of young people based on their economic and social and cultural situation, their values, their career plans, their conception of the efficiency of occupational guidance offers etc. have not been taken into account.

This issue was examined in the project "Determination of (occupational) guidance needs for various groups of young people under 28 years of age in the European Union", carried out between March 1993 and May 1994, the results of which are now available (12 national reports, in the original language and English, partly in French, the synthesis report in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish).

A total of 21 target groups were examined; nine of the reports examined two of the groups and three reports examined one target group. Particular attention was devoted to young people at a particular disadvantage who had no or inadequate access to occupational guidance services. The target groups selected are listed in the appendices of the 12 national reports and the synthesis report as the aims and findings of the project - as stressed in the synthesis report - can only be viewed in the context of the interrelationships between the various elements. The national reports have been published in separate editions as certain readers are interested

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[1] Occupational profiles and training in occupational guidance counselling, CEDEFOP, 1992, 12 national studies and synthesis report.
Educational and vocational guidance services for youth and young adults in the EC, European Commission, 1993, 12 national reports and synthesis report. As a supplement:
EUROCOUNSEL, Counselling and long-term unemployment, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin, 1992-1993, 6 national studies and synthesis report.

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in specific target groups whose problems in finding training and work have supra-national features which are characteristic of other target groups which we selected.

This project was commissioned by Task Force: Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth as part of the PETRA 3 programme aiming to produce indicators for differentiated and demand-oriented occupational guidance practices and to create more offensive planning strategies to reach as far as possible those target groups which were excluded from guidance counselling for the reasons contained in the reports. New proposals are being formulated at present to prepare the gradual transition to the "LEONARDO DA VINCI Programme".

Enrique Retuerto de la Torre
Deputy Director

Gesa Chomé
Project Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

This CEDEFOP project has to be seen in the context of the process of European integration, which is now offering EU citizens scope for choice within a broader range of training and job opportunities outside their home Member States. Choosing a course of study and a career, vocational guidance and vocational resettlement are thus taking on new dimensions for young people and young adults. Finally, the situation on national, regional and local training and labour markets is increasingly dependent on developments in other Member States and the Community as a whole.
The consequences of economic and industrial development in the Community can weigh particularly heavily on certain groups in our society (e.g. older workers, the disabled, persons who are disadvantaged for ethnic, social, religious and political reasons). Special attention therefore needs to be paid to particular target groups within society whose need for vocational guidance information is greater. Vocational information can help individuals to develop an awareness of the possibilities open to them.

Guidance services must be equipped to give young people and adults information and advice which will alert them to possibilities available elsewhere in the Community and enable them to make educational and vocational choices which are in tune with future expectations in the Community.

Vocational guidance in all its aspects - information, documentation, advice and counselling - is seen as a key to the development of human potential and hence as an important weapon in the fight against unemployment. It offers both economic and social advantages. It can reduce the number of drop-outs from schools and courses and can also narrow the gap between job requirements and individual skills and motivation.
Planning at the level of the individual must be stimulated. A function of vocational guidance is to help individuals in taking and putting into practice sound and well thought-out decisions regarding their training and future careers.

Aim of Study

The aim of the CEDEFOP-project is to determine the vocational guidance desires and needs of young people and young adults up to the age of about 28 in the European Union.

The demand for information in the relevant population, the end-users of the information, needs to be properly documented. It is important to identify the different target groups and to provide answers to the following questions:

- what are their vocational expectations?
- what socio-economic factors play a role in their process of choice?
- what specific regional and cultural background factors influence their process of choice?
- are they reached by occupational counselling services? Do they have access to the career guidance facilities on offer and to information on the labour market?
- what other actors exert an influence on young people's vocational choices?

It is not the central concern of this CEDEFOP project to describe the structure of vocational guidance and information services in the EU countries. On this topic, publications have recently appeared giving factual and comparative descriptions of systems in all the EU countries[1].

Selected target group

For this study it was decided to look for the information and guidance needs for people in problematic situations. The disadvantaged for social, economic and also ethnic reasons. The specific target group selected was one out of the 'young people at a risk' category: *Zwerfjongeren*, 'young drifters', in the Netherlands.

The number of homeless people in The Netherlands is based on estimations and on qualitative research. But it is a fact, nevertheless, that the number of homeless people is growing. There has been an increase particularly among 'young drifters', boys and girls. As young homeless people tend to drift into the city, they are a growing concern for the mayor cities in the Netherlands, most of all for Amsterdam. It is estimated that about 50% of all homeless people stay in the capital.

Most of these young people are unqualified, early school-leavers, unemployed who are clearly excluded from any guidance that is provided. They all have a same 'drifting career': they drift from their own family to foster families, to care/welfare homes, from school to school, and end up breaking all the ties with carers, and move into the city.

Although it is a heterogenous group, almost all the young drifters have had negative experiences with care takers, grown-ups, help agencies and school. They have a very low self-esteem and hardly any social relations. They start a 'drifting career' in order to escape from their disordered life. They do not seek for help nor guidance in any way, as they lack of confidence in the system and adults in general. Quality guidance is needed to restore their confidence, to boost their self-esteem and brake their resistance to information.
As these young people are not in control of their life, it may be assumed that the kind of guidance they need is personal and social guidance, rather than vocational guidance. Whether vocational guidance can help them solve their problems, is something that still has to be investigated. It could help them to arouse self awareness and to develop an awareness of the vocational possibilities open to them.

Concept of the study

A literature study was to serve as a basis for this CEDEFOP project: a review and analysis of national studies -written up since 1988- would provide enough data to describe the situation of the selected target group. The time and resources available only left scope for a secondary study, not for primary research.

[1] The following publications have been used as source material for this study: (1) *Occupational and Qualificational Structures in the field of educational and vocational guidance for young people and adults in Belgium, Ireland, The Netherlands, Portugal* (CEDEFOP DOCUMENT, 1992); (2) *Educational and Vocational Guidance in the European Community* (Consolidated Report, TFHR, 1993).

However, it has not been easy to find relevant research for The Netherlands. Little or no research has been done on the needs and wishes of young people themselves with regard to vocational guidance, at both national and regional level.
Practically no targeted research on the socio-economic background of young people, their desires and needs has been carried out. Some studies of 'young drifters' are available, paying special attention to their 'drifting career', but none of them relate to (vocational) guidance needs. There is lack of quantitative research. This makes it difficult to produce statistics.

Another problem which emerged in the search for data is that information on the extent to which vocational guidance services are used by the target groups and the evaluation of those services in terms of their satisfaction of the needs and desires of the clients is non-existent.

The findings and conclusions in this report must thus be viewed against a background of inadequate coverage by primary research.

It was therefore decided to gather information from agencies working with the target group selected for this study. A number of experts and officers from the relevant agencies were personally interviewed and others were contacted by telephone. All data obtained by these means have been incorporated into the text.

In addition, by way of contextual information, in order to give an indication of which vocational guidance services are or are not available to the selected target group, the structure of the educational and occupational guidance system in The Netherlands is examined in more detail at relevant points in the study.

NOTE

By the time this report was drafted and send to CEDEFOP, new material -studies, laws, publications- on the subject appeared. It was decided that an additional study based on this material could provide worthwhile additionel information. The results will be added to the present report.

I. YOUTH INFORMATION

In practice youth information has already been provided for many years in different ways and in a variety of working approaches. In Netherlands government policy[2] however, it forms a fairly new area of concern. The function of youth information is to transfer forms of social and cultural knowledge which enable young people to find their way in society.

I.1 Educational and vocational guidance: a component of youth information

In order to ensure effective knowledge transfer, it is necessary to have a good focus on young people as the target population. The information should finally be tailored to young people and the way young people use information. The fact that youth information has only recently become a concern of government policy is probably one of the reasons why there is a lack of targeted research in this field.

No attempt has so far been made to form an overall picture of young people as a subject of scientific study. Furthermore there is a lack of empirical data on the functioning and effects of the youth information interaction process as it takes place between mediating agencies and young people. This is one of the findings of the exploratory research carried out on the operation of mediating agencies working in the field of youth information[3]. The term 'mediating agencies' denotes the group of persons, bodies and institutions who in one way or another concern themselves with the provision of youth information: they form the link between demand and supply.

It may be seen from this research that there is a lack of systematic data on youth information in general. There is an urgent need for evaluative research (effect measurement) in the field of youth information, so that some clarity can be established as to what young people get from the information. There is a need to show how youth information functions in the daily lives of young people themselves: how do young people use information?

The fact that research is needed in these areas is highlighted by the reactions of interest organisations of young people, such as *Jongerenbond* (JOBO). Discussions with JOBO[4] indicate that, while many plans are developed in official circles to improve the situation of young people, they clearly fall short of their target. The target groups to which specific campaigns are directed are only reached to a limited extent. JOBO sets out to help young people to improve their own situation and, in so doing, seeks to use the experience of the young people themselves. A contact group for young people in agriculture (NAJK)[5] takes the same view, finding that young people must learn to reflect on their own future.

2 Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culrural Affairs (WVC) - Youth policy document *Publieksgerichte Maatschappij Informatie* (Social Information geared to public needs), 1990, which specifically addresses the question of youth information policy.

3 *Werken aan informatie voor jongeren* (Working on information for young people), an exploratory study of the operation of mediating agencies in the field of youth information by F. van der Linden (1992), conducted within the framework of the policy document by the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs.

4 Jongerenbond - JOBO (League of Young People): conversation with Patrick van der Horst, senior staff member.

5 Nederlands Agrarisch Jongeren Kontakt - NAJK: discussion with Peter Munters, executive officer.

This becomes apparent from research that, among others, JOBO has itself conducted among young people, but more especially from contacts JOBO has with young people.

The study mentioned earlier ([3]) seeks to document the information supply side, covering both the production and distribution of information, but not the demand side, i.e. it is not concerned with the users of information. Youth information is a process in which both the supply and the demand side play a role. Although further research is definitely needed on the supply side, research on the demand side - which has not so far been carried out - is also necessary in order to gain an understanding of the participation of young people in the social information process. Research is needed in which young people themselves are directly involved, as the youth interest organisations have clearly indicated.

- It should of course be pointed out here that the supply side, the mediating agencies themselves, admit that the information and the products with which they work are not tailored to the *world and lifestyles of young people*. The difficulty here is that 'youth culture' changes rapidly and is practically impossible to keep track of. This is a further argument in favour of involving young people directly in the entire information process. A complaint generally voiced in this area, however, is that young people themselves often show a lack of interest and motivation: young people show a fair degree of resistance to information.

1.2 Young people and guidance

It is a fact that most publications have hitherto limited themselves to describing the operation and structures of the mediating agencies. This also applies to more specifically targeted studies on educational and vocational guidance services. Little or no attention has been devoted to the way in which activities are performed, how far they go in their guidance function, what criteria they apply, what insight they have into the youth target group they are dealing with, and other such aspects.

Although this CEDEFOP project does not set out to describe in detail the structure of Dutch guidance services, the existing publications in the field will provide information on the target groups of these services[6]. A number of points emerge from the data on the basis of which some idea of the accessibility of mediating agencies for young people can be derived. Furthermore, on the basis of those data, a list can be drawn up of the concerns which most preoccupy young people, providing some indication of their information needs.

It is also possible, by applying a "negative analysis", to draw cautious conclusions with regard to the demand side, i.e. the youth target group. By way of elucidation:

- if the supply side is mainly concerned with the 15-17 age group, you could conclude that the groups below age 15 or above age 17 are reached to a much lesser degree and that the information is less tailored to those groups;

[6] Data obtained from interviews with persons active in the field of educational and vocational guidance have also been included here, for example with Ron Reeder, project manager at OCTANT Noord-Holland, regional study and careers guidance centre.

- if the supply side is almost exclusively concerned with school pupils and students, you could conclude that young people who do not attend school or college are reached to a much lesser degree.

The data obtained in this way provide the framework within which the target group selected for this study can be placed. In the absence of (empirical) studies devoting direct and explicit attention to the many problem areas which exist in the field of youth information, this analysis was carried out in the context of educational and vocational guidance.

I.2.1 Mediating agencies

A number of important findings *of* and *about* mediating agencies are presented below.

Findings of mediating agencies:

- information to young people is made difficult by the fact that they themselves often have no mental picture of their future: they are unable to stop for a moment and contemplate their future, so that they develop no vision of their future prospects. Their interest in a future career is often limited to "wanting to earn money" and "doing fun things";
- youth culture changes very rapidly and is therefore difficult to keep track of. This makes it difficult to provide young people with information they need; the available information material is inadequate; it is not sufficiently tailored to the world and lifestyles of young people;
- young people show lack of interest; they need a change of attitude which will help them to take information on board. Their resistance to information does not come solely from within themselves, young people are also conditioned by their environment;
- girls are more difficult to reach than boys;
- young people with a low standard of education and, to a lesser extent, boys from ethnic minorities are difficult to reach.

Findings about mediating agencies:

- youth information seems to be a mainly *male concern*, although this varies somewhat according to sector;
- the average age of persons employed by the mediating agencies is around 40; few persons below the age of 30 (or over 50) work in them;
- there is no systematic recording of clients: there is a lack of clarity with regard to the number of clients, the frequency of contacts and the composition of target groups;
- there is a lack of cooperation with other organisations and little awareness of the activities of other institutions; the referral system leaves much to be desired because of this;
- young people themselves seek information: this means that few initiatives are developed by the mediating agencies to reach target groups;
- too few low-threshold institutions: access to them is difficult for young people;
- much attention is paid to educational guidance, less to vocational information and career counselling. A fair number of gaps are to be noted in personal and social information provision.

Remarks and conclusions

- The fact that girls are more difficult to reach is presumably due in part to the fact that men are over-represented in most mediating agencies: girls would be reached more effectively if there were more female officers. This is certainly true for girls from ethnic minorities. More officers should be recruited who themselves have origins in ethnic groups and would therefore be better equipped to understand the milieu and experience of young people from those groups.

- The average age of officers of the mediating agencies is somewhat on the high side; with greater involvement of the young people themselves, it would probably be possible to reach more young people to better effect, particularly the more difficult cases.

- The accessibility of the information needs to be improved so that the interest of young people can be aroused. Tailoring the material and the way it is presented can reduce resistance to information. Following on from this, it would probably be easier to reach less well educated young people if more *visual* information were developed: the lower a person's standard of education, the more difficult it is to take in written information. Visual information is also more in tune with the world and lifestyles of young people today, strongly oriented as they are to all things visual.

- Young people seek out information for themselves. The group of young people who do *not* do so are the very ones who would gain most benefit from professional guidance. A group which comes to mind here is that of problem teenagers who, because they often become detached from the official information circuit, need extra attention. They form a youth information target group which can only be reached if the official circuit targets activities in their direction: preventive action is needed. The preventive effect is also achieved if young people are referred more often and at an early stage to other (professional) agencies.

- It is to be noted that little attention is paid to personal and social guidance. This is an aspect of guidance that should form part of the preparation of young people for society. A timely response to personal problems and instruction given at a young age in the phenomenon of 'society' can have a prophylactic effect and, amongst other things, prevent young people from becoming drop-outs.

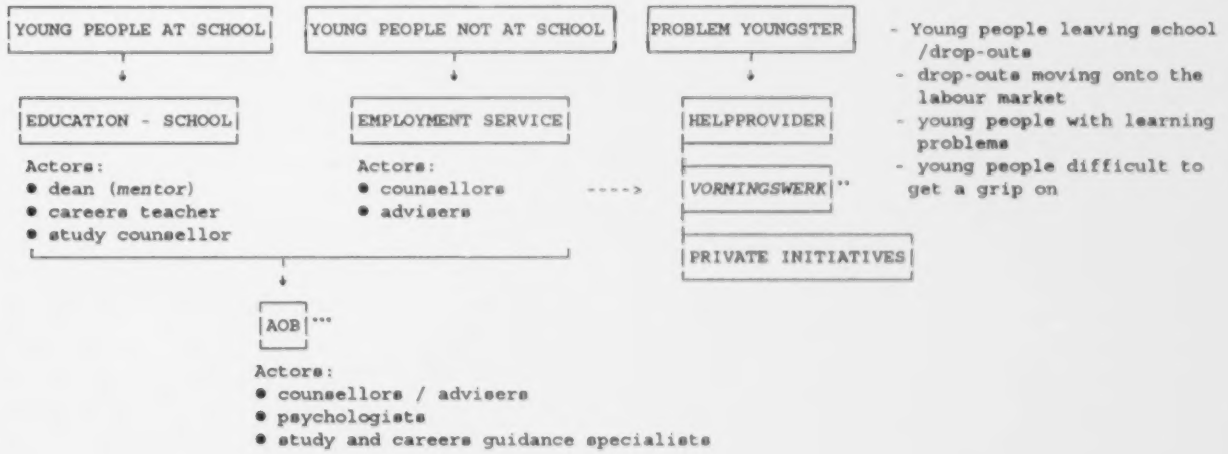
II. GUIDANCE SERVICES IN THE NETHERLANDS

II.1 Accessibility of guidance services

Educational and vocational guidance in the Netherlands is limited mainly to the *education system*. The guidance services gear their activities mainly to school pupils and students. In addition, most products are tailored to this select group of young people. Young people not attending school, both employed and unemployed, have more limited scope for obtaining information.
In The Netherlands educational and vocational guidance is seen a task for guidance counsellors within the educational system and for counsellors at careers guidance services. Personal and social counselling is a task for youth assistance organisations; it is seen as a component of social care. In the present structure, these are separate fields.

Problem youngsters -e.g. young people in marginal groups, young drifters, drop-outs- are thus only reached to a limited degree or not at all. They can themselves turn to youth assistance organisations, to support them in their personal problems. These organisations in turn, could refer them on for further guidance and information. But precisely this group of young people seldom take the initiative to seek out these organisations, often because they have already had bad experience of them or because the organisations' access threshold is too high. If the young people do not take the initiative themselves, they do not come into contact with the guidance and counselling they so badly need.

The diagram below gives an overview of the possibilities for information and guidance open to young people at the present time *:



* The structure of educational and vocational guidance services in the Netherlands has undergone considerable changes in recent times. Their infrastructure has been adjusted, there have been changes in the tasks assigned to them and a change in the number and nature of the actors involved.

** *Vormingswerk*: non-compulsory education for young people and adults (from age 18). Main target-groups are young people with serious problems, those of a low standard of education, both in work and unemployed. Special attention to young people from ethnic minorities.

*** AOB: *Adviesbureaus bij Opleiding en Beroep* (Advisory Agencies for Education and Employment)

II.2 Guidance within educational institutions

Education has traditionally been geared to formal instruction as such. This explains why, relatively speaking, more attention is paid to educational guidance and less to vocational guidance. Young people attending school are not sufficiently prepared for work. Exceptions here are training courses within the framework of the apprenticeship system and, to a lesser extent, vocational education.
Little attention is devoted to carry-over programmes, i.e. facilities aiding the transition from school to employment. Occasionally, such programmes are set up on an experimental basis. The aspect of personal and social information is hardly ever addressed.

Primary education

In primary education little or no attention is paid to vocational counselling. There are one or two exceptions to this, such as the regional promotion campaigns aimed at drawing the attention of primary school pupils, but also their parents, to the facilities available within the vocational education system.
The transition from primary to secondary education is decided by two main actors: head teacher and parents. They are partly guided in taking their decision by the results of a test (CITO test), which all pupils in primary education have to undergo. The pupils themselves are not actively involved in the process of choice.

Secondary education

In 1993 the *basisvorming - BAVO* (basic education) has been introduced in secondary education. It consists of an innovative educational approach. During the BAVO all pupils have a curriculum of 15 compulsory subjects. The purpose of the BAVO is handing the pupils the possibility of reaching a minimum level during a period of between two to four years depending on the pupils' capacity and interest. It postpones the final choice between one of the streams in secondary education (transition period). The length of the BAVO depends on the type of school and the capacities of the individual pupil. Time is also reserved for educational and vocational guidance. Pupils receive these lessons in addition to the regular subjects. Schools' policy on educational and vocational guidance activities must be part of the yearly work-plan. It is now schools' legal duty to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

In most Dutch schools for general and vocational secondary education educational and vocational guidance is provided by a *schooldekaan* (careers teacher). The *schooldekaan* is a teacher that next to his regular teaching duties, is responsible for the educational, vocational or occupational orientation of the pupils. The careers teacher received some special training (45 days spread over two years) to fulfil these additional tasks. The position of the *schooldekaan* is problematic, as they lack support by the central government. They have no official status. They are not mentioned as such in the policy note from the Ministry of Education and Science on educational and vocational guidance activities in schools. They lack time and of an adequate school policy to facilitate them in their tasks.
Careers activities are at this moment subsidised via contract with the AOBs (see II.3). This will change in the near future, as the schools will then have greater freedom in spending their budget in a way which fits their own purposes. The board of the school can decide to which teachers they will give reduced teaching hours, and for which special tasks (like guidance).

Careers teachers can give school pupils general information on study and career options. For fuller and more detailed information, they can refer the young people on to the AOBs (*Adviesbureaus bij Opleiding en Beroep*: Advisory Agencies for Education and Employment). The assistance of an AOB adviser/ counsellor can be called on for groups and/or individuals. Careers teachers can also recommend that the parents go with their child to an AOB for further assistance. This applies in particular in cases of young people whose problems lie deeper.

Higher Education

Universities and Higher Professional Education Institutions (HBO) provide an institution-based guidance services for their students. This is done by *dekanen* (careers officers). Most of them are psychologists or have a degree in social sciences, but they do not receive a special training for their guidance activities. The services provide guidance on college and course options, limitations on entrance, grants and military service. It also provides help and advice on personal problems or problems which have to do with life as a student.

II.2.1 Referral possibilities for secondary school pupils

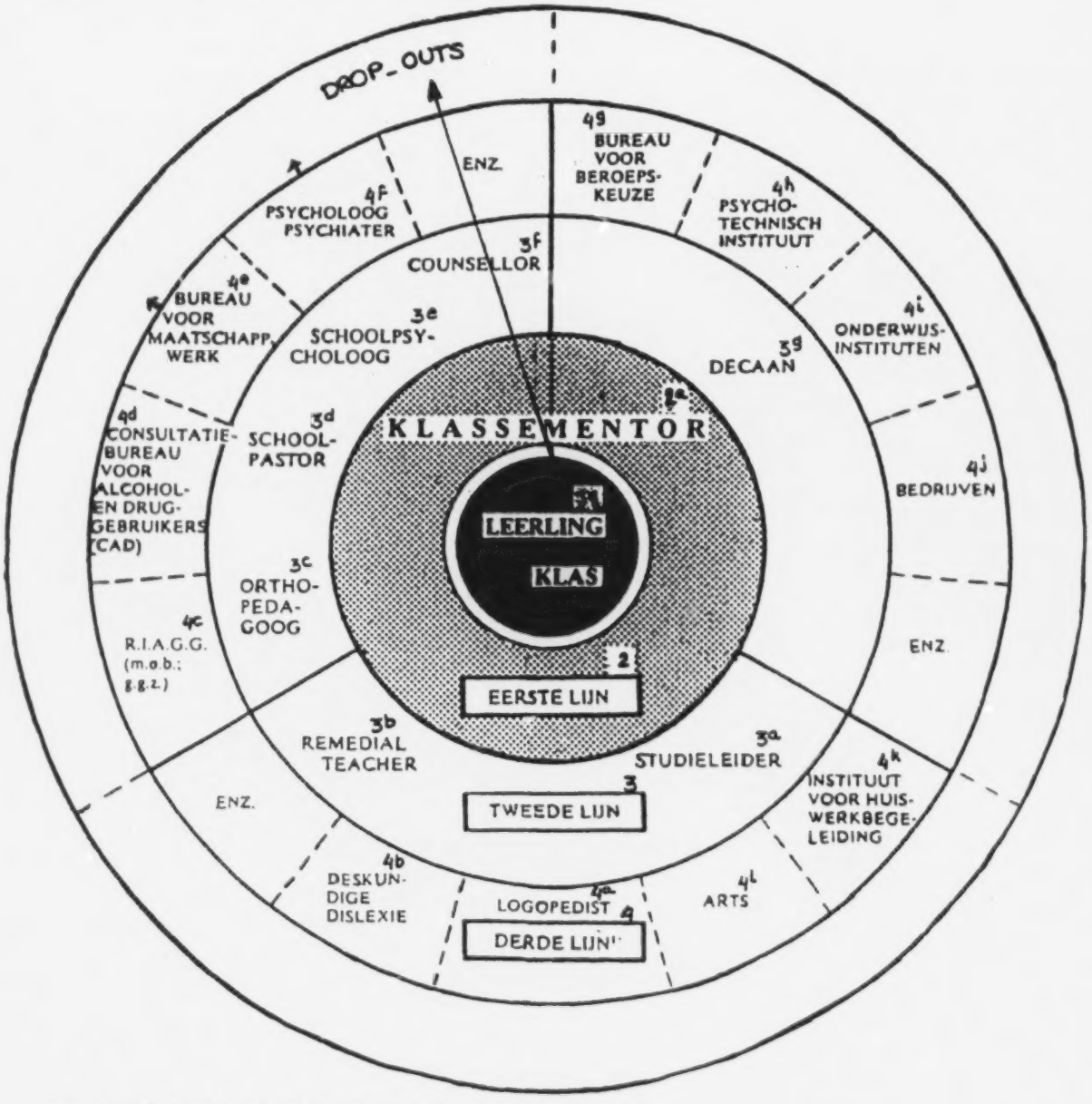
The figure below is a graphic representation of the referral possibilities for pupils attending schools within the secondary education sector. It indicates at what stages persons or institutions are involved in the information process (these are actors who also exert an influence on the young person's process of choice). The figure is defined in such a way that it looks like a safety net surrounding the pupil through which he cannot fall. One group of young people has been left out of the picture, however: the premature school-leavers, or drop-outs. It is clear that there is no safety net for young people with serious problems who eventually drop out of the education process or leave it prematurely.

- Government policy is geared to setting up a system under which schools must have drop-outs registered with reporting or coordination bureaux. These bureaux would provide the first response, would counsel the young people and, where appropriate, refer them on to other agencies.

Explanation of the figure:

- The pupil is central; he forms part of a class.
- The pupil has contact with the 'outside world' through his class teacher.
- The class teacher is in contact with three sectors to which he can refer a pupil:
  1. the official information sector: the careers teacher, who in turn can refer the pupil on;
  2. a sector for pupils with learning problems: referral to a remedial teacher or the study supervisor, who in their turn can refer the pupil on;
  3. a sector for pupils with personal problems: counsellor, school psychologist, school chaplain, remedial education specialist, who in their turn can refer the pupil on.
- A possible variant of the figure is one with a fourth circle around the pupil. This would be an empty circle in which no actors are specified.

Stages at which actors are involved in the guidance process:



(from: *Handboek Leerlingsbegeleiding* (Pupil guidance manual), Samson)

Key to legend:

1	Pupil - Class	4b	Dyslexia expert
2	First line:	4c	Regional Centre for Non-residental Mental Health Care - RIAGG
2a	Class counsellor	4d	Counselling Centre for Alcohol and Drug Users - CAD
3	Second line:	4e	Social services offices
3a	Study supervisor	4f	Psychologist, psychiatrist
3b	Remedial teacher	4g	Vocational guidance centre
3c	Remedial Education Specialist	4h	Psychotechnical institute
3d	School pastro	4i	Educational institutes
3e	School psychologist	4j	Firms
3f	Counsellor	4k	Institute for homework supervison
3g	Careers teacher	4l	Doctor
4	Third line:		
4a	Speech therapist		

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II.3 Guidance outside educational institutions

Employment services (*arbeidsbureaus* - ABs)

Young people not attending school or college, whether they already have jobs or are looking for work, can turn to the Arbeidsbureaus - ABs (employment services). They must be registered at the centres. The main activities of the ABs is to match supply and demand in the labour market. They perform tasks which are directly related to this main job. Due to political measures the counselling capacity of the employment services has largely been reduced during the past few years. More and more they focus on special programmes, e.g. long-term unemployed and adult careers guidance.
The guidance activities are done by vocational counsellors/advisers, who received a special training.

The execution of guidance activities in schools, vocational counselling, and occupational information no longer belong to the primary activities of the employment services. These are now activities of the AOBs.

For further information and more specialised help in connection with study and career choices, the employment services can refer young people to the AOBs. They refer them in particular to 'information counters', at which advisers may be able to provide further information.

Advisory Agencies for Education and Employment
(*Adviesbureaus bij Opleiding en Beroep* - AOBs)

The AOBs were established in 1993 by the fusion of public and private guidance agencies. There are 17 AOBs in The Netherlands. The AOBs are at this moment the most important educational and vocational guidance services. The AOBs are funded by the Ministry of Education and Science and by the Labour Organisation. The AOBs perform functions which are in some way complementary to those of the schools and employment services. They are market-oriented activities, in which services are tailored to the needs of the clients:

- education: schools
  Schools conclude contracts with AOBs to provide information and guidance to their pupils, at individual or group level, on training and career options. The AOBs are geared to the general secondary education system (AVO), senior secondary vocational schools (MBO), preparatory vocational schools (VBO), the apprenticeship system and the special secondary schools (VSO). Their services and products are specifically tailored to these young people.

- employment services:
  Clients who go to employment services for information and advice on training or career options can be referred to the AOBs. Like the schools, employment services conclude contracts with the AOBs for this service. The AOBs gear their services to people in work, the (long-term) unemployed, persons of a low standard of education, women returning to work, the disabled to some extent, persons on benefit and minorities.

The services on organisational level focus on developing and strenghtening the infrastructure ('development trajectory'). At individual level they offer an integrated and coherent set of information, counselling, advice and work orientation. The AOBs have different types of employees, vocational counsellors, careers specialists and psychologists. They all received a special course designed for their activities within the AOB, provided by *hogescholen -HBO (higher professional education institutes)*. The course runs over two years, comprising three 4-day courses a year and a further evening per fortnight.

The AOBs are second-line organisations: young people cannot apply directly to the AOBs for professional information. Referral takes place through the education system or the employment services. When course advisers detect problems, they can refer individual pupils to the AOBs. This is done in consultation with the parents. When schools do not refer young people, the parents themselves can take their children to an AOB. They must then pay for this service however.

Youth Information Centres

The main aims of youth information centres -including youth welfare services- is to offer young people advice and help with practical and serious (personal) problems: young people still at school, unemployed, in lesser extend employed young people, and older young people (17+) mainly with a lower standard of education. The access threshold is low of these centres. The centres nevertheless initiate contacts with young people in specific cases.
The centres play an important role in giving advice and information on a very wide range of subjects. The list below shows that young people approach the centres on a wide variety of subjects. It is to be noted that most services try to provide information on these subjects, although it may not form part of their primary tasks. The list details the affairs that preoccupy young people and at the same time gives an indication of the need for information experienced by them[7]:

- in the educational field: compulsory schooling, choice of subjects, follow-up courses, school/learning problems
- in the employment and occupational field: all aspects of the work situation; making applications, vacation work, unemployment, working conditions, dismissal
- in the financial field: study financing, grants, benefits
- specific subjects (for problem youngsters) (provision of preventive information): running away, abuse, incest, rape, suicidal behaviour
- in the legal field: residence permits/immigration law, divorce, offences against the law
- in the socio-relational field: social and emotional relationships, friendship, courtship, living together/marriage
- in the medical field: virtually any subject, alcohol, sexual matters, drugs
- leisure activities: sport, going out
- housing

Many agencies identify bottlenecks in the provision of information in general, particularly to girls, young people of a low standard of education and ethnic minorities.

[7] Van der Linden (1992); see footnote [3]

II.4 Remarks and conclusions

- The absence of the personal and social guidance element in the range of guidance given to young people attending school is a gap in the information provision. It should actually form a structural component in the guidance system: the integration of all three forms of counselling could have a preventive and emancipatory effect.
  Alongside structural provision at the schools, there must be facilities for referring young people with individual problems to other services for educational and vocational guidance or to other help provision agencies.

- In order to promote an understanding of the labour market process among school pupils it is necessary, alongside traditional signposting, to add some innovative elements. In addition to information on study and career opportunities, the concept of work must be made more transparent: working conditions must form a component of the total information package.

- Even for students in higher education, who have greater access to written information material, it is necessary to tailor information more to increasing students' understanding of the concept of work. Here too, the working conditions likely to be experienced should be better elucidated. This also applies to students following courses which are clearly vocationally based, so that they do not become compartmentalised in their own vocational world or experience.

- The market-oriented organisation of the AOBs has the following disadvantages:

  - in most cases the school is the customer for the products of the AOBs and decides what products it will purchase on the pupils' behalf. The school, as the client of the AOB, therefore decides what information is to be obtained for the pupils' benefit. It is also up to the school (careers teacher) to decide which individual pupils are to be referred to an AOB. The question might be asked whether pupils actually get the information they need through this system of information provision;
  - the fact that parents have to pay for additional services provided by the AOBs. The question is then, if its proves necessary, whether parents have the resources to take their child to the AOB at their own expense.

- Young people with serious problems, whether still at school or registered with an employment service, do not take their problems to careers teacher or employment services. The access threshold of these services seems to be too high. There is a psychological barrier. Persons in certain risk groups are occasionally seen, but this is relatively infrequent. These young people evidently refer themselves to other agencies or are referred on by those responsible for them. It is not clear how the schools or employment services. Because there is this psychological barrier, young people carry their problems with them for longer. Sometimes for to long and problems get too much for them.

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III. YOUNG DRIFTERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

III.1 Introduction

The Netherlands has a relatively large population of young drifters. Most studies estimate that some 7000 boys and girls are without any form of shelter or have no homes, but others estimate that the number could be twice as high. In recent years the number of drifters has been on the increase, particularly among girls and young people from immigrant backgrounds. This is apparent from, among others, indications of help agencies and reports in the media. The increase is mainly in evidence among boys under 20. It is very difficult to produce numbers of homeless people in The Netherlands. The numbers differs according to the definition of concepts such as homeless, roofless and drifting. There has been no quantitative research so far. An inventory research done by the Association of Dutch Municipalities focusses on all 'homeless' people within the confines of help institutions (boarding houses, homes for homeless people, drop-in's etc.). These approach tends to include double-count, but also tends to exclude the 'hidden homeless'. There are no such figures for *young* homeless people, nor for drifters.

Social factors play a role in the increase in numbers of young drifters, through such phenomena as the materialisation of society, the trend towards (hyper)individualisation, the breakdown of traditional family ties and changes in the structure of the family. The recession has brought about an increase in poverty and the disappearance of more and more support facilities for young people, so that the existing system is becoming overloaded. The increase in school sizes (scale enlargement) and the limited resources available to schools have meant that less attention can be given to pupil guidance, particularly on an individual basis. Schools have little scope to provide for the welfare needs of young people. Because of these developments, there has been a distinct weakening of social control, which makes it difficult to give early warning of problems experienced by young people and to deal with them.

With the abolition of the youth's index in the individual rent subsidy and the reduction in social housing construction, as well as the raising of the age for benefit entitlement from 18 to 21, the socio-economic position of young people in the Netherlands has deteriorated considerably in recent years. Young people who cannot continue to live at home face increasingly formidable obstacles because of this.

Concentrations of young drifters are mainly encountered in the large cities. The cities exert an attractive force on youngsters, with a variety of concomitant forms of problem behaviour. Amsterdam especially attracts large numbers of young people. Through the absence of response facilities in the towns, young people drift from one town to another in search of overnight accommodation. This mobility makes for a target group which is difficult to trace and reach.

- This case-study focusses on young drifters in Amsterdam. Their situation can be seen as being representative of that of young drifters in other large cities.
  Furthermore, probably due to lack of accomodation for homeless people in the provincial cities, there is a tendency of 'sending' the young drifters to Amsterdam, as it is a general thought that the capital has a lot of provisions to help them. So it is implied that the young drifters are better off in the capital.

Young drifters form part of a risk group: 'young people at risk'. Proper support facilities are necessary; otherwise a large number from this group will become irrevocable drop-outs: out of school but, ultimately also, out of society. Many initiatives need to be developed to prevent these young people from ending up on the margins of society. This and the fact that the group is increasing in numbers makes it a relevant target group in the context of this project. Information can have a preventive and emancipatory effect. Thus future problems can be anticipated and prevented. These young people have to contend with a lack of information in all its aspects, not just in the field of study and career guidance.

III.2 Information sources

Research sources

Since UNESCO called out 1987 as the Year of the Homeless, research on homeless people in The Netherlands increased. Not much information on homeless young people though is available. There still is a lack of systematic information on this group in our society. Only recent studies focus on this group, although systematic research to the transitions from homeless to labour market is non existent.

The problem of conducting research on young drifters is the relative inaccessibility and unavailability of these young people. It is a very time-consuming activity, which explains why most studies are limited to young drifters within the confines of help institutions.

No specific information is to be found on the future expectations of young drifters (training, work, career), their vision of society and the role that they play or are able to play in it. There is certainly a need for further research on the actors which influence their choosing behaviour. Little attention is paid to the possible role that schools can play in responding to these young people, offering them individual guidance and giving early warning of any problems. No research has been carried out into the effectiveness of the official agencies providing help to young drifters or into the extent to which these agencies can make a contribution to the positive development of the young people.

Most of the research carried out has been qualitative research. There is thus a lack of quantitative research in this field. It is worth noting that the various studies are based on criteria other than the fact of being without home or shelter. There are also differences in the numbers and average ages of the young populations investigated.

Interviews

To supplement the basic material, contacts were made with help agencies which concern themselves specifically with young drifters in the Netherlands. It was thus possible to gather additional information on young drifters and to gain a better insight into forms of help geared to offering young drifters a future.

The contacts were limited to organisations in Amsterdam and The Hague. A much more thorough study is needed to form a good picture however, and it is necessary to make contact with many more agencies, including schools involved in projects offering help and educational facilities to young drifters.

The aim in the discussions held was to focus attention as much as possible on the role that the mediating agencies play or could play in responding to and offering guidance to young drifters. An attempt was also made to chart the social context and the school/work situation of this group.

III.3 Concepts: roofless, homelessness, drifting

A variety of concepts are used to define the phenomenon of young drifters. Thus a distinction is made between young people living on the street (*street youth* or *street children*) and young people who roam around without a fixed home base (*homeless youth*, *Obdachlosen*) [8]:

- street youth: these young people are more or less permanently on the street and, for shelter, make use of cellars, covered shopping precincts, multi-storey car parks etc.

- young drifters: these young people are permanently on the move from one address to another under *constant threat of losing their temporary accommodation at any moment*, which means that they end up temporarily living on the street.

This is the distinction that is most commonly applied. The only variation is in a certain preference for one term over another. Some find that the term 'homeless' sounds more positive than 'drifting', since the latter tends to conjure up images of drunken and scruffily dressed individuals. This certainly does not apply to young drifters.

In the Amsterdam project, young drifters are grouped into three categories [9]:

- young people without shelter (roofless)
- homeless young people
- day-time drifters: the key feature of this group is that, although they have a place of shelter and a 'home', they do not feel it offers them much and instead tend to hang around during the day in the centre of Amsterdam.

▸ The definition of the term may vary and thus results in differing views and interpretations, which in turn makes it difficult to form a picture and quantify the population of young drifters in the Netherlands.

[8] Van der Ploeg (1991)
[9] Korf/Hoogenhout (1989)

III.4 Young drifters: characteristics and origins of drifting

Young drifters are victims of situations and circumstances (family/care home). Because of their social backgrounds, they are often troublesome young people who have been difficult to raise and are difficult to handle. They have serious personal and relationship problems. They lack a social network (family, friends, school) on which they can fall back when problems arise. In normal circumstances, children have a social network which gives them support when things start to go wrong.

The study by Van der Ploeg (11) identifies the following five characteristics of young drifters:

1. a particularly unfavourable family background (disruptive family influences: physical abuse, sexual abuse/incest; neglect; children do not feel wanted at home, often feel rejected and run away)
2. many previous contacts with help agencies
3. negative experience of school
4. low self-esteem
5. few friends.

There are a variety of theories centred on the reasons why youngsters begin to drift and the factors which play a role in the phenomenon. Generally speaking, a combination of factors can play a role, centred on the young person himself or herself (his or her personality), society and the family:

> *Drifting can be seen as an escalating process that begins in a family in which youngsters are neglected or ill-treated against a background of poverty and/or stress. As the youngsters grow older this intolerable situation comes to a head, while at the same time helpers fail in their bid to provide support for the young people and their families.*([8])

The family

Many young drifters are escaping from a disordered family situation. Major causes: mental and physical abuse by parents or carers (incest, child abuse) and alcohol abuse and drug addiction on the part of parents or carers.

There has been a major increase, particularly in the large cities, in one-parent families (mother-child), while at the same time many provisions to ease the burden of child-rearing for parents are being - and have already been - removed. More and more, people are having to cope alone.

The family as an institution has gone: young people can no longer fall back on the family when problems loom. Also the role of grandparents has been drastically reduced. This is partly due to increased mobility. Family members are often no longer near neighbours. The weakening of family ties is a major factor. Compared with the social system of communities in other European countries, the Netherlands presents a very negative picture.

Care homes

Almost half of the young people who become drifters do so after leaving care homes or foster families. Many have been put out onto the street. After an upbringing in a welfare home, they break the ties with any carers and move into the city.

Society

Dutch society has become very individualistic. This individualisation is particularly characteristic of the large cities. There are no longer facilities for institutional response. Social control has weakened considerably, which makes early detection and action to deal with the problems of young people difficult. The economic position of young people has become more difficult. In addition to problems on the housing market, both minimum youth wage levels (among the lowest in Europe) and benefit payments to young people have been cut. Young people reach majority at the age of 18 but are still in many respects not regarded as adult members of society.

Education

Education does not function satisfactorily for many young people, resulting in worrying figures for dropping out and truancy (15% of pupils go absent without authorisation). In recent decades there have been major changes in education. It no longer responds adequately to the needs of young people. The bond between young people and school has loosened. Social control in the schools has weakened considerably, in particular because of the scaling up process in education.

III.5 Forming a picture of young drifters

Socio-economic background

Young drifters come from many sections of the population, but most are from working class and lower middle class backgrounds. The small percentage of young drifters from higher status backgrounds are - so it seems - exclusively white.

Most of the families have no involvement in the work process, because of unemployment, unfitness for work and the like (estimated proportion 35-40%). The socially disadvantaged form the largest group. The children grow up under conditions which leave much to be desired in social and material respects. By far the majority of fathers who are in work have low-skilled or unskilled jobs.

Parents from better backgrounds nevertheless try to continue playing a role, if the young people are agreeable. They have more money to spare and can do more to find solutions (boarding school, a place of their own to live etc.).

Origins

The ratio of young drifters from indigenous backgrounds to those from immigrant communities is 3:1.

The number of immigrant young drifters is rising rapidly. This also applies to girls, who until recently did not feature in this group.

Incomes

The incomes of most of the young drifters are not derived from work. Many of them have no formal income. Common sources of income are:

- benefits
- crime (e.g. drugs-related activities), prostitution
- charity from other persons.

Girls are generally more likely to have an income from legal sources than boys.

View of society

The majority of young drifters seem to have a traditional view of society: the traditional role pattern predominates, though this applies more to boys than to girls. Boys think that girls should perform a traditional role, i.e. 'their place is in the home', where they should be looking after children and keeping house. Girls themselves confirm this view (the family situation as role model?). This role attitude is most pronounced in the group of young drifters from immigrant backgrounds. (Girls hardly feature in the immigrant group, but their number is increasing.)

View of the future

The view of the future presented by young drifters themselves can be categorised as follows:

- no view of the future
- cannot see any prospects
- in the longer term, the family ideal.

When it comes to making plans for the near and somewhat more distant future, it seems that working, studying and making applications score fairly low among young drifters. The more distant the future, the clearer the picture of the young people becomes. This shows a predominantly traditional view of society: 'a house, a garden and a dog'. Many young people see living together, marrying and starting a family as their object in life ('safety, security, stability'). It is if they want to pursue a conventional lifestyle, as compensation of what they missed: a good stable family life.

Most young drifters thus assume that their drifting lifestyle is only temporary. They do not focus on how they can attain their ideal for the future and they have no ideas on the subject. It is to be noted that girls in these groups recognise the need for education. For them education opens up prospects of independence and being able to take care of themselves. But girls have conflicting ideas on the subject. Overall, two groups can be distinguished:

- work and education are of secondary importance: girls think that someone else will take care of them. They want to marry and have children;
- seeking a relationship, marrying and having children play a secondary role. These girls want to

be independent and take care of themselves and any children. Some young female drifters become mothers at an early age. Having a child is often used as a means of getting out of their drifting lifestyle. That way, for example, they qualify more quickly for housing.

Education and work

Educational level

It is typical of the educational careers of young drifters that they have changed schools once or several times. This despite the fact that their time at school was very short and many did repeat-years (even at primary school).

Generally speaking, young drifters have a low standard of education. After primary school they typically go on to a junior secondary vocational school (former LBO, now VBO) or junior general secondary schooi (MAVO). They also show a high drop-out rate: follow-up courses are not completed. Many young drifters have only been through primary school. There are even some who never completed primary education.

The point of separation is when they run away from home. If they resume their schooling at a later stage, they often fail to complete it because of frequent changes of address or problems over money. Many of these young people often played truant in the past and were expelled from school because of disruptive behaviour. The consequence of this is that, not only do they drift from house to house, but also from school to school.

It seems that the choice of school plays a major role: most of these young people, especially girls, say that they were placed on follow-up courses which were not suitable for them. Result: truancy and expulsion from school. Even so, the girls are very much aware of the importance of education. They do want to complete their schooling. The girls consider education of such importance precisely because it offers them the prospect of being independent in the future.

- Once they have started out in a drifting lifestyle, young people tend to stop going to school. It is not clear how many of them still do so. Estimates vary considerably: 75% - 50% - 20%.

Working experience

It would appear that at least 90% of young drifters do not work. Some have occasionally done temporary, usually unskilled jobs. Research shows that the majority would like to have jobs, but they do little to find work.

- Prospects are bleak as far as both school and work are concerned.

III.6 Young drifters and guidance provision

Information provision in the Netherlands is mainly limited to education. After primary school, young drifters usually leave regular education fairly quickly (age 13-14). Hence they cannot be reached through that information channel. Young people for whom things began to go wrong at an early age, already at junior secondary school, and who then took up a drifting lifestyle are difficult to communicate with. They tend not to make contact with any other mediating agencies in order to obtain information.

Young drifters do of course have many problems to contend with. The problems, as the young people themselves experience them, arise in the fields of

- housing: lack of it or poor quality
- finance: lack of money, debts, benefit payments
- social relations: work, school, friends, family.

The young people need information in these fields, information of a practical nature. Finding accommodation is the first problem to be solved for all young drifters, otherwise they cannot make a start on solving any of their other problems. Once accommodation has been found, helpers can focus on the psycho-social problem area. These young people have to contend with feelings of inferiority and have difficulty in building up social relations (friends, parents, school).
Due to the complexity of their problems, guidance provision needs to be part of an integrated approach. Vocational guidance can not be seen separate from personal and social guidance in these cases.

Schools

Most young drifters are inarticulate, non-intellectually inclined children. They are best suited to a practical, vocationally based form of education, but often end up in general education. Most are placed in junior general secondary (MAVO) schools, a very small proportion in senior general secondary (HAVO) or pre-university (VWO) schools.

Practical vocational education is widely undervalued in society. The dominant impression that the labour market no longer has any place for people with a practical, vocationally based education is reinforced by campaigns sponsored by government and industry which proclaim that ever more highly educated people are needed in the work process: technological advances demand people with a good educational background.

Because of the dominant impression that the market for people with a practical vocational education is contracting, the government has devoted too little attention to this form of education. Schools have been merged too hastily, with too little attention paid to basic vocational education and, by comparison, too much paid to general formative education. Increased competition between schools due to falling pupil numbers has led them to be too preoccupied with the marketing and upgrading of the school, and the element of basic vocational education has tended to be thrown off as ballast. Even primary schools are trying to stop the outflow. In the end, the number of pupils on school rolls determines their future existence. The more children move on to general secondary education, the better the reputation of the school. This attracts more pupils.

- The freedom of choice and interests of the children must be the central consideration. But the form of follow-up education to which children are directed is determined by the parents and the school (class teacher). It is the result of interaction between these two actors: they influence one another. The higher the standard of education and income of the parents, the more influence they exert on the streaming of their children. The lower their level of education, the less influence they exert. The educational progress of pupils thus depends on the environment in which they grow up:
  - lower incomes: many are sent to junior general secondary (MAVO) schools
  - higher incomes: more are likely to be sent to senior general secondary (HAVO) and pre-university (VWO) schools.

- Vocational education is clearly failing to provide an answer. It has a negative status: parents would rather send their children to a school for general formative education, i.e. a 'white-collar school', than to a school for practical vocational education. 'Blue-collar jobs' are out of favour.

Schools in Amsterdam

Schools are aware that they need to invest in pupils and should act preventively. They are prepared to do so. However, their capacities are limited. They would like to give pupils individual attention, but cannot do so for practical reasons.

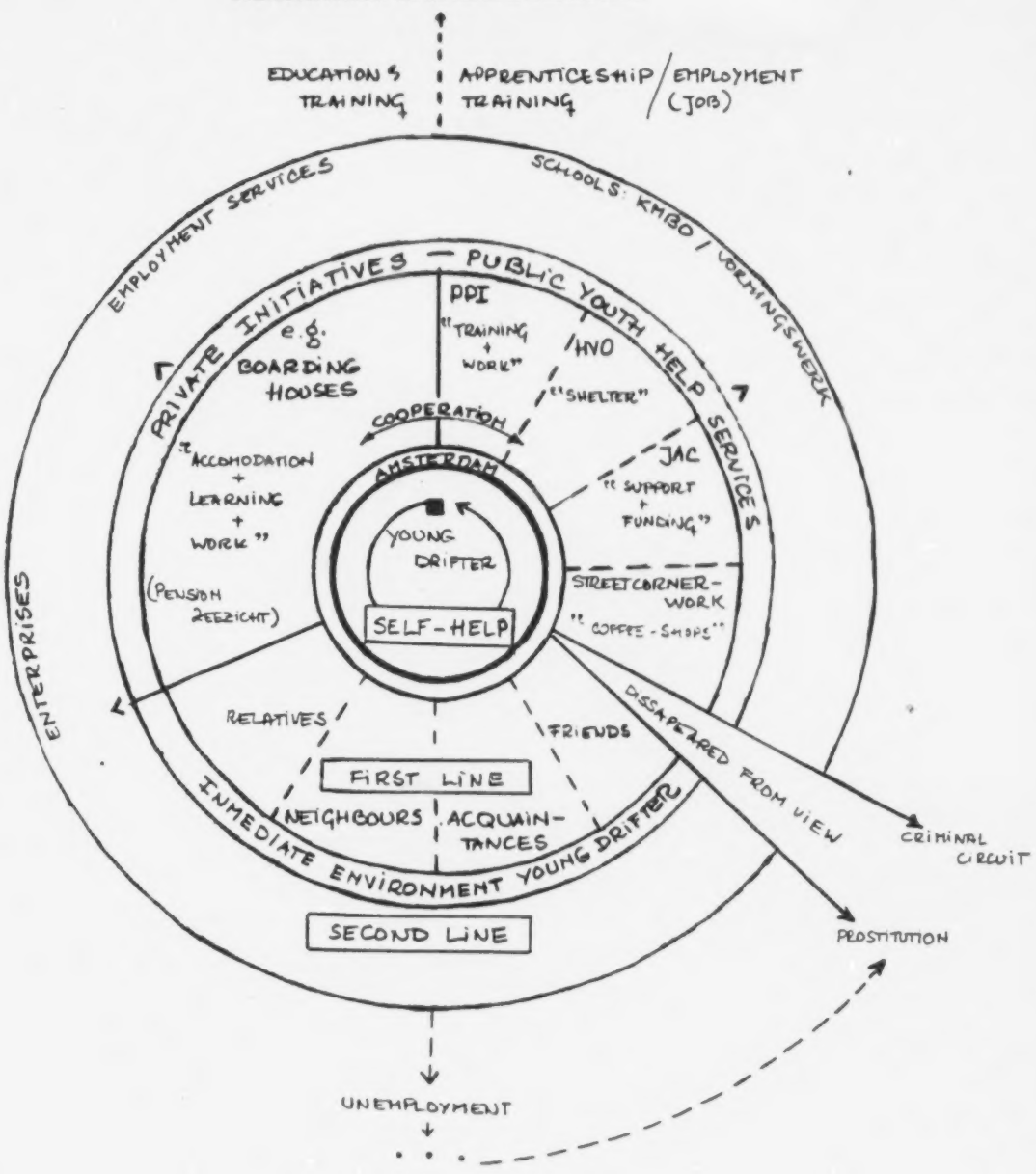
Schools realise the need but lack the resources or the time to devote attention to individual pupils. Schools must consider the number of pupils enrolled (survival of the school) and ensure that the pupils move up to the next level year on year. The number of problem pupils is rising, attitudes are hardening and constraints are increasing.

Schools cannot offer a real response to pupils, but nevertheless do a lot, notably in the field of homework supervision. For some young people, this form of support is not sufficiently effective. Psychological factors within the individuals concerned play a major role here. They are not open to the help offered and probably cannot cope with it at such a young age. Whatever the case may be, they are not able to make use of the guidance that is offered.

Social Work/Formal and Informal Help Provision

The graphic represenation (according to the model under II.2.1) shows what actors young drifters in Amsterdam can come into contact with, once they enter the help circuit. Actors in the field of immediate support (housing), school and work, financial affairs, medical affairs and legal affairs.

These actors play a role in the drifting progress of young people the moment they drop out of the regular education circuit. Hence they focus on cases in which things have gone wrong. They may be helpers from the young person's immediate environment (relatives, persons from the neighbourhood) or professional helpers.



Immediate environment of young people: relatives, friends

It is a striking observation that help seldom comes into the picture before a young person runs away. Help mostly comes into play after the event. From that point on young people get a lot of help, but it is usually not *professional* help. Most young drifters are not or no longer in contact with the official helping agencies.

In view of the extensive experience of most young drifters with helping agencies, young people mostly seek help in their own environment. Most help comes from the immediate environment of the young

people: relatives (outside the immediate family circle), friends or acquaintances. But most young people do not call on helpers to solve their problems.
They are rather disinclined to do so, and first try to solve their problems in their own way (sometimes they do nothing about them). They are constantly trying to organise things for themselves. That this does not always lead to solutions is demonstrated by the fact that young people who do not get help often get into worse situations.
Where they do seek help, they approach acquaintances in the first instance. This kind of help is rated more positively than that from official help providers (9).

- The result of this form of informal guidance help is moderate to poor. It is seldom if ever effective.

With regard to help given to girls, a difference may be noted between that given to girls from indigenous and from immigrant backgrounds:

- the family tie among immigrants is much stronger than among indigenous young people. Help from relatives is thus more common among immigrant girls.
- immigrant girls seek and more often receive help from their family and are less often placed in welfare homes, in contrast to Dutch girls.
- mainstream professional help is not tailored to the needs of immigrant girls. If they are not supported by other members of the family, they soon end up in prostitution.
- when girls stop drifting, this does not mean that their problems are over. They are often dissatisfied with their lives. Immigrant girls often have contact with helpers after their drifting has ceased. Dutch girls on the other hand hardly ever do. They 'can take care of themselves'.

Formal sources of information: Official helpers

Young people usually only come into contact with helpers (official or private) when they leave the education process prematurely and take up a drifting lifestyle. Young drifters have most contact with helpers at the start of their drifting, but they mostly live their lives on the street. Because of the nature of the official help system - threshold too high and too interfering - young people tend to turn their backs on the traditional help system. Youth help agencies thus fail adequately to reach a proportion of the young drifter population.

Generally speaking, young people are mistrustful of adults, particularly help providers. This mistrust is the fruit of their experience. A relationship of trust is a special factor where young people are concerned.

- The access threshold of the help providers is evidently too high and they are not viewed positively by young drifters. These young people need low-threshold agencies with an understanding of the world in which they live.

- In view of their relatively young age, young drifters will be less well acquainted with the help facilities on offer. It is perhaps partly because of this unfamiliarity that they do not approach the services available.

Official - low-threshold - assistance to young drifters is chiefly limited to incidental help. It mainly involves help of a purely practical nature, in connection with shelter, housing and financial matters for example. The workers are not educational or vocational guidance experts and their knowledge is limited in this area. Nevertheless, when ever possible they try to provide educational and vocational guidance when relevant.

- *Amsterdam Young Drifters Project: Guidance towards employment*

In Amsterdam a cooperative link has been formed between local official agencies, known as *Project Zwerfjongeren Amsterdam* (Amsterdam Young Drifters Project).

The aim of the project is to provide daytime activities and educational and occupational guidance for young people without shelter and with no fixed homes. The project works with young people who are familiar with the teams of one of the centres involved: genuine problem cases, i.e. young people who cannot find help anywhere else. For Amsterdam, this amounts to about 500 young people on an annual basis. For a certain group of young drifters, special projects are needed in which a great deal of attention is focussed on the young person.

It has been found that there is a gap between what these young people want and what their actual capacities permit. They are inclined to overestimate their own capabilities. The project endeavours to make the young people aware of what the possibilities are and guides them towards their educational or occupational choice. Educational and vocational guidance is provided within the network's own facilities.

- Some young people complete their training and are able to find work through the job centre. Others disappear without trace. Others arrive back on the doorstep, having come to the notice of the courts.
- There is a need of continuing monitoring the progress of the young persons in their training or employment. They need long lasting guidance and support by a carer.

Private initiatives: Boarding houses for young drifters

The official help circuit is not very effective where certain groups of young people are concerned. Government resources and initiatives do not find their mark because of a lack of understanding of young people and the bureaucracy of the system.
The private inititatives which have been developed in Amsterdam seek to make up for these deficiencies and to improve the situation of young drifters. Good support is necessary which responds to the needs of young drifters. That starts with an offer of long-term accommodation in an environment where young people can find their feet and get a second chance.

On national level *Stichting Zwerfkinderen Nederland* has set itself the aim of opening boarding houses for young drifters in all the big cities in The Netherlands. In 1990 it made a start on the implementation of its boarding house project based on the threefold principle of 'accommodation, learning and work'. The starting point for the boarding house concept was that, if a prospect could be offered them by way of proper support and accommodation, most young drifters would not slide into the circuit of serious crime

or prostitution.

Proper support and accommodation means that more is offered to young people than just a roof over their heads. The aim is to raise prospects for the future by providing preparation for society and devising educational projects. Cooperation with the official help provision agencies (PPI, *Vormingswerk*/KMBO) is a key element. By mutual cooperation and inter-agency referral, optimum results can be achieved.

Work to set up the boarding houses is still in progress. Some have already been opened in a number of cities, but only the one in Amsterdam -*Pension Zeezicht*- is fully operational.

- *Boarding House project: Pension Zeezicht in Amsterdam*

Pension Zeezicht is the first boarding house one to be opened, providing an effective response for young drifters in Amsterdam. *Pension Zeezicht* works on the principle of 'accommodation, learning, work', and has a capacity of 200 young people on an annual basis.

Young drifters can stay at the boarding house for an extended period. They are given an opportunity to rest and find their feet. In cooperation with their helpers, they can draw up a plan for the future. Information, education, guidance and preparation for society offer them a basis on which they can resume their lives as full participating members of society. Young drifters need a good home without the imposition of authority. This is what they have had in the past all too often; it does not respond to their needs and is one of the factors which prompted them to take up a drifting lifestyle in the first place. The young people are assigned responsible tasks. It is important that they learn not to neglect their own (home) environment. An appeal is made to their basic feelings. They are involved in everything that concerns the boarding house and the various projects devised. In short: they are taught self-respect. A process of self-awareness is set in motion.

That way the young people pay for their stay in the boarding house. In addition an attempt is made to prevent any stigmatisation of the boarding house by opening it up to non-drifters, i.e. to students and tourists, who can stay the night there in return for a relatively small payment. The café and restaurant are open to all. The advantage of this is that the boarding house can make some money. This concept also ensures that the young drifters can make many contacts outside their own group. This helps to broaden their horizons, an aspect of great importance to young people from immigrant stock in particular.

The boarding house assists in the search for work, work experience placements and/or education. It stimulates and activates young people to approach help agencies. Cooperation is pursued with firms which are prepared to train young people without prior instruction. This is often done in cooperation with the vocational schools.

The boarding house itself also arranges educational and occupational projects in conjuction with the short secondary vocational education (KMBO) service.

- The *Pension Zeezicht* model works very well as such, but lack of professionalism shows up deficiencies where quality is concerned. These initiatives need to be given much more effective backup.

III.7 Facts and figures

(figures based mainly on studies by Van der Ploeg, 1991, and Hes/Verhoeven, 1992)

Depending on the definition of the term 'young drifters' adopted, investigators consider that there are about 7000 such persons in the Netherlands. Another estimate arrives at a total twice this figure. At all events there are at least 7000, and the group is increasing in size, especially among the under-20s. Estimated number of young drifters in Amsterdam: 2000-4000 (approx. one fifth of the total). There seem to be differences in the drifting lifestyle of boys and girls respectively. Girls form a separate group.

Numbers

According to official figures (guardianship societies), as many girls as boys run away from home. But the ratio of male to female young drifters is 3:1. Girls who are not recorded as drifters presumably solve their problems in their own way.

The fact that girls who run away from home behave differently to boys results in a distorted picture of the number of 'drifting' girls. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to trace them at any given moment. This applies in particular to girls over 18.
Girls often solve their (drifting) problems in their own way, i.e. they make a conscious choice between

- seeking shelter with a boyfriend
- moving in with an older man
- going into prostitution.

Having a child is also viewed as a way out by girls. Anything rather than return home or go into a welfare home.

Boys sometimes also get into prostitution, but figures show that they are much more likely to turn to crime.

Age

The average age of the boys is 18; that of the girls 17. The average age of young people from indigenous backgrounds is 17. Since there are hardly any girls from immigrant backgrounds in the population of young drifters, this subgroup does not lend itself to further subdivision into male and female.

Research has shown that girls become drifters at any earlier age. They are therefore younger on average than the boys.

Family and background

The majority are from working class backgrounds, the largest group from socially disadvantaged families. The problems young drifters - male or female - have to contend with in the family are basically the same. They often come from incomplete and problem families. Girls will more often have experienced sexual violence. The relationship with a stepfather is commonly found to be a problematic one among girls. Despite all the problems, girls have more frequent contacts with the parental home than boys. Girls seem

to experience a strong need for contact with their parents.

Place of origin

The findings for the Amsterdam situation are that one in three young drifters comes from a large city. The others are from medium-sized towns or from small provincial communities.

- large city (> 100 000 inhabitants) approx. 50%
- provincial town (20 000 - 100 000 inhabitants) approx. 30%
- small community (5 000 - 20 000 inhabitants) approx. 20%

Time spent drifting

Young people seem to show different patterns of drifting in different towns and cities.

	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	Other towns
up to 1 year	48%	76%	60%
2 years and over	52%	24%	40%

The time spent drifting by girls depends on a number of factors, namely the age at which they begin their drifting, the nature of the problems at home and the nature of the help obtained:

- age factor: the earlier (age 11-12) they start to drift, the longer they continue in that lifestyle (homeless 6-7 years); they stop at the same age as girls who become homeless at a later age;
- problems at home: the nature of the problem situation partly determines the length of time the girl continues to drift; if the cause is rooted in adolescence problems, the drifting is of short duration; if the cause is physical ill-treatment or neglect, drifting continues for longer;
- nature of the help obtained: the degree of help offered may influence the duration of the drifting period. Professional help provided early probably results in a shorter period of drifting. The way the help is provided as a total package is more important than the nature of the help itself.

III.8 Summary and conclusions

An increase in numbers of young drifters has been noted in the four large cities in The Netherlands. An increase which is probably generated by the 'new poverty'. This has not been demonstrated by research, however. There is a relationship, but it is an extremely complex one. The rules of the Dutch welfare state are very complex. The systems that people have to deal with work well, provided there are no problems. Where they do occur, a smaller group of people fall through the net and are not covered by welfare provision. A rigidity has developed in the system as a result of which solutions ready to hand are not - or are no longer - applied. The scaling up of education, help provision and welfare facilities also play a major role. It has made the system less flexible and institutions more remote from the ordinary citizen.

There has been a shift from official to private initiatives. The officially sponsored agencies, the 'established institutions', do not seem to offer an adequate response. In Amsterdam two thirds of the facilities available to young homeless people are offered on the so-called 'grey circuit'. Resources made

available by government are thus not being used to proper effect.
Private initiatives need the support of the authorities. Without basic financing it is difficult to offer the quality which can be provided when private institutions are placed in a position to attract professional staff. An example of this is supplied by the activities of the *Pension Zeezicht* project. The *Pension Zeezicht* model works very well as such, but lack of professionalism shows up deficiences where quality is concerned. Initiatives thus need to be given more effective backup.

The fact that young people are not channelled into certain courses of development seems to result from problems of an organisational nature. The initiatives of both central and local government and of both official and private agencies seem in one way or another to be patchy in their application. There is a need for greater clarity: schemes of assistance must be made more visible.

Through their experiences they have lost much confidence in help providers and in adults as a whole. Help and other services for youth information do not get through to these young people, so that they miss out on much that should be available to them. They seldom, if ever, themselves approach guidance services/agencies where they can be helped or informed in a professional manner. Through lack of time and resources few, if any, official agencies seek out these young people and offer them a second chance. Exception in the initiative taken in Amsterdam, where the boarding house model seems to meet the guidance needs of young drifters.

The situation of young drifters is often based on assumptions. The data provided by studies are not drawn from a large number of respondents. There is little real understanding of the situation of young drifters. insight in the transition from homeless to training and/or labour market in lacking.
But, as things stand, the educational and occupational prospects of young drifters offer little hope for the future.

All studies seem to indicate that most young people who run away from home come from problem families. These young people are thus in search of security, social contact and a fixed abode. Provision to meet the needs of these young people at risk needs quality guidance, i.e. guidance by specialists with real understanding of their specific situation.

IV. European Dimension in Guidance

Relatively few Dutch young people travel abroad for study, for work experience or for work. But the number is increasing. The most mobile are those with a high educational level. This is of course stimulated by European programmes such as ERASMUS, but also by national initiatives. Those with a higher level of education and training are offered many opportunities to study or follow a 'stage' abroad. Students on higher education institutes receive the relevant information via their careers officer. These officers know all the facilities available to study abroad, in Europe or other in parts of the world. Specialised agencies also offer assistance and information on the possibilities.

Young people with a high level of education, even though they may have stayed abroad during their study, start looking in their own country for a job. Only if there is an excess of people with the same qualifications which makes finding a job difficult, they tend to look for possibilities in other countries. (This could be stimulated through EURES). There is a preference for working in The Netherlands. It is a different situation for employees, who are transferred by their employer to another country. It is becoming more and more difficult though for employers to send their employees abroad, as many partners also have a career and are not willing to give up their career easily in favor of the other.

For young people with a lower level of education, the European dimension in guidance is not so well developed. This will probably change with the introduction of ACTION III of the PETRA programme. The National Guidance Resource Centres that have been set up under PETRA should stimulate transnational guidance activities through information to careers teachers and guidance counsellors.

The European dimension in guidance at secondary educational level is still something that has to be developed. For careers teachers have in fact little time for regular guidance work. Bringing in a European dimension into their regular counselling task, would imply -first of all- a personal training into European matters. There is need for specialisation.
Counsellors and advisers at careers guidance services would have more opportunities to specialise and introduce a European dimension in their guidance activity. However, there is a practical problem. The guidance system is in a stage of transition. The regional services are still working on setting up a national system. It does not seem realistic to assume that these services will introduce a European dimension in their regular activities in the present situation. It will be something for the near future.

Nevertheless, within the framework of the PETRA and other (national) programmes many exchange projects have been set up. Young people have the opportunity to travel abroad (in small groups) for training or work experience. Exchange bureaus, specialised agencies are trained to prepare young people for their stay abroad.

Many young people till the age of sixteen, more specifically those with poor social and economic backgrounds, have never been abroad. Not even for a short holiday. This means the family spend their holiday in The Netherlands, out of preference or forced by lack of financial means. They are not used to think in terms of 'mobility in Europe'.

When their children are offered the opportunity to spend some time abroad, e.g. in the framework of an exchange programme, the parents are often reluctant to let their children go. An additional problem is lack of language skills among these young people (and their parents). They are not able to communicate in another language, which makes it less likely for them to go abroad.

The benefits that (European) exchange programmes offer tend to benefit those youngster with a good social and economic background. They are used to travel, are self-confident and able to travel independently at a young age. The less favorable the personal situation of young people is, the less they benefit from the opportunities open to them (e.g. homeless young people / young drifters).

The European dimension in vocational counselling and information is something that needs to be stimulated. Guidance on mobility in Europe ought to be available for all young people to make them aware of the possibilities open to them. Even if they do not make use of the possibilities, they should be well informed.

European programmes could offer young disadvantaged/homeless people new opportunities if they would be tailored to their situation. These young people are characterised by features of low self-esteem and lack of confidence. A (working) experience abroad could help them overcome some of their problems. Pilot projects with problem children have proved that travelling to foreign countries helps young people to gain self-confidence and arouse self-awareness. It helps them to overcome personal barriers, while at the same time they have the experience of living and working in another country.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

This study sets out to determine the need for information, particularly with regard to vocational choices, among different groups of young people up to the age of 28. However, owing to the lack of systematic data on the proportion of young people in the social information process and the lack of evaluative research in the field of information to young people, it has proved difficult to carry out this analysis of requirements.

The results of the literature study show that educational and vocational guidance only has a limited effect. This is due to an inadequate understanding of how the process of choice operates in young people. More systematic research is needed in order to determine how young people use information and how they approach the labour market. With the aid of these data it will be possible to develop a more innovative system of information, which will address the way young people think about their situation.

At the same time it is clear that the future prospects of young people and their position with respect to study and career options have not been sufficiently examined in relation to their socio-economic backgrounds. Further research is also needed with regard to actors having an influence on the vocational and educational choices of young people.

General guidance issues

- There is a need for more attention to be focussed on the 12-16 group. Studies so far concentrate on the over-16 age group. Next to qualitative research there is a need for quantitative research.

- Further research should not be concerned only with the experience and information needs of young people but should concentrate more on the young people themselves (thus less on the guidance services). It is recommended that young people be directly involved in the information process, so that the information is tuned more closely to their needs.

- Too much attention is given to the manner in which information can be presented and to information techniques that can be used. Much less attention is devoted to the content of the information and the extent to which the information gets across to young people. Traditional signposting is the most commonly used method, i.e. attention is drawn to training and career opportunities and the relationship between training and employment. Innovative elements need to be introduced:
  - integration of information on study and career options with information on personal matters and society (preventive action, emancipation, help with problems, influencing behaviour);
  - work orientation: the concept of work must be made more transparant; there is need of information on working conditions;
  - more attention needs to be paid to practical orientation and carry-over programmes by which young people are better prepared for the transition from education to work;
  - target group-specific information products need to be developed, with attention given to the content, nature, presentation and accessibility of the information. In its development,

special account needs to be taken of the resistance offered to the information by both young people themselves and their immediate environment;
- information must be formulated more clearly and be simpler in its conception;
- more specialisation within information services: professionalisation of the services, more client-specific service provision.

- Services are often of too high a threshold for young people. Attention must be devoted to the accessibility of the services, so that young people can be reached more effectively:
  - young people who are difficult to reach call for special attention, for example 'girls', poorly educated individuals and young people from immigrant backgrounds: more female information providers with a better insight into the world and lifestyles of girls would have a threshold-lowering effect; more information providers from immigrant communities, who have a better insight into the experience of young immigrants.

- Guidance services/mediating agencies should make better use of each other's expertise. Cooperation between schools and helpers needs to be stimulated. Offering help to young people early and referring them on to professional help agencies can prevent problems in their future educational and occupational development.

Specific guidance issues

- It has been shown that information is targeted mainly at young people in the 15-16 age group. It is thus also important that attention be paid to young people below that age level. Already at the primary school stage, much could be done in terms of information provision. There is a strong case for imparting an understanding of how society works to pupils at primary school stage. Information in which the emphasis is placed on prevention and emancipation.
  It is precisely at this age that problem youngsters have to cope with a lack of support and information; a timely response could help these young people to cope better with their problems and instil in them an awareness that there are other ways forward.
- It is important to break down stereotype images of certain study and career options, in order to ensure that certain choices are not excluded from the outset. Good information content means giving young people information of a kind that will provide them with a sound basis on which to make choices unfettered by preconceived ideas. Young people must learn to make reasoned choices which are not guided by societal, socio-economic and cultural preconceptions: stigmas must be broken down; occupational prestige, gender roles and social background factors, for example, must feature less prominently.

- Parents and carers are important actors in the process of reflection and choice of young people. Perhaps because of a lack of good information, parents take up a conservative stance and adhere to stereotypical attitudes. Parents, particularly in primary education, should be involved in the entire information function. This process of awareness can make a positive contribution to the guidance of young people in making their choices.

- Teachers, course advisers and study supervisors are also important actors in the process of choice. They must be made aware of their implicit selection and referral criteria. Further

professionalisation and specialisation in information provision are essential.

- Prospects at school can be improved by ensuring that the young person is correctly streamed for follow-up education, thus helping to prevent possible truancy and, eventually, dropping out from school (in some cases becoming drifters).

Young homeless people / young drifters

For some young people the education system appears to be too rigid. Among the young drifters there are relatively much under-talented individuals, who would benefit from alternative routes of schooling (e.g. curriculum changes). Once young people have dropped out of the regular education system, they often cannot get back in for a second try. Educational establishments regard these young people as 'unteachable'. Thus drop-outs do not get a second chance in the regular education system.

Perhaps lower learning thresholds could be introduced (particularly through the apprenticeship system), whereby these young people could at least get into vocational education and follow a course of practical basic instruction. Theoretical subjects are often difficult for this group to cope with. (The problems have only increased with the loss of the craft schools.)

- Training projects set up for young drifters only work if there are jobs for these young people after their training. There is little point in facilitating entry to such projects if the real problems arise at the output end: training projects with no clear link to employment often lead to nothing. Apprentice tradesmen who have been trained without an employer in view have no chances of work.

- If the system of help provision succeeds in reaching young drifters and instilling into them an appreciation of the importance of training, a major problem still remains unsolved. After training it is almost never possible to place the young people in jobs. Those within the system of help provision thus begin to get a sense of impotence: what is the point of training these young people if there are no jobs for them? No-one is there to watch over them. In addition, many low-skilled occupations are disappearing.

- Another problem which arises is the lack of financial resources to fund the training of these youngsters. Education in the Netherlands is not free. Second-chance courses also cost money. There is no funding for them.

- The difficult, if not hopeless, situation is dramatised still further by the fact that, within the help provision circuit, noises are increasingly heard to the effect that these young people will probably never get 'paid' employment and that the information provision should be adjusted to take account of that.

- The initiatives of *Pension Zeezicht* in the field of training and work merit emulation and should be supported. All boarding houses should be equipped with workshops, to give young people a chance to develop skills, obtain training and thus make themselves more attractive to employers. In-house preparatory schemes constitute a means of offering young drifters some prospects of a

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future.

Specific guidance issues

- Schools should offer more guidance and post-school support. For young people with problem situations at home, school is a place of solace in their lives. Thus it should be possible for them to claim the right to stay on after school, for example in order to do their homework in peace and quiet, and not be forced to spend their leisure time on the street.

- A wrong choice of school is often the cause of truancy. Truancy leads in turn to more problems at school. The problems at school may lead to expulsion, which in turn can lead to drifting:
  - When choosing a school the personal background and wishes of the young person must be taken into account. Too few young people are placed in vocational education, whereas practical vocational education merits much more attention precisely for this target group.
  - Young people must be involved much more in the choices which determine their social development. This brings their basic feelings into play and will enable them to think more positively about themselves, but also about the help available to them. The freedom of choice and interests of the young people must be a central consideration.
  - There are also under-talented individuals among young drifters: providing tailor-made solutions for young people in very problematic situations can offer them a slightly better chance on the labour market.

- Psycho-social guidance can prevent young people from taking up a drifting lifestyle and thus disappearing from view. The help must go further than merely offering (temporary) shelter or young people or packing them off to boarding schools or welfare homes. This does not meet the need for help experienced by these young people themselves.

- Most support centres only offer practical and/or temporary solutions and do not help young people to form a more positive image of themselves. This is precisely what these young people need in order to develop a more positive view of the future and thereby contribute to solving their own problems. Young people who have a negative image of themselves and society and hence also of the help available see the future in negative terms and continue drifting for longer.

- More targeted research is needed on young drifters. Clear definitions must be worked out and methods developed in order to make young drifters easier to reach. Research which has been carried out does not offer any clear solutions. The divergence in results is too great. The official help provision agencies need to develop an understanding of young drifters in order to be able to operate more effectively.

- The facilities of the Labour Organisation (*Arbeidsvoorziening*) are not geared to specific target groups. The problem of drop-outs should be built into an 'approach structure'. The problem arising here is that the employment services/job centres can only mean something to young people if they have registered at a centre as looking for work. Not only are young drifters often too young to 'sign on', they experience the centres as having too high a threshold; they will not go to job centres of their own accord. After all, many young drifters are not on any official records.

VI. Recommendations for future research

General recommendations

- Much information is provided to young people by a variety of agencies, but it is not clear how effective this information is: an evaluation system must be developed on the basis of which effectiveness can be measured.

- Evaluation of vocational guidance services: to which extend are they used by target-groups; do they satisfy the needs of the clients; in which way are activities performed etc.

- Research is needed on the wishes and needs of young people with regard to vocational guidance and on the way they use information. What do they get from the information?

- An inventory on the experiences of young people with mediating agencies is needed: quality of guidance. A study on the helpfulness/unhelpfulness of careers guidance could provide a picture of the actors involved in their definitive choice.

- More information is needed on the role vocational guidance plays in the decision-making of young people. Are they influenced in their choices by vocational guidance? Does it leed to changes in their choices?

- There is a need for a more differentiated approach to information in which the material to be presented and the transfer of the information are adjusted by the mediating agency to the client's level of development: socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects are crucial to the nature and method of the information transfer. In addition to adjusting the information, the mediating agency itself must also change. More professionalism and specialisation are necessary in order help young people effectively.

Specific recommendations

- More attention is needed for preventive measures. Schools play an important role in the guidance of young people. Most careers teachers and careers officers have had no special training for their guidance work. Specialisation is needed, specially for those counsellors working in problem areas in the large cities. Counsellors must have a miminum level of qualification: special training on a high level should be required.

- As parents or carers are important actors in the process of choice of their children, they should be involved in the guidance process of their children. A change of attitude must take place. There is a need of information from the side of the parents.

- It is important not to loose track of young people leaving school prematuretly. A registration system is absolutely necessary. Organisations must be set up that will take care of the registration, that will function as a safey net and refer the drop-outs were relevant to other

guidance services.

- Guidance services should be set up on local level. This could be within schools, but also at local community houses. The people working in these services could work much closer with their clients and have a better understanding for their personal situation. More individual guidance would be possible: monitoring is easier.

Young drifters

- Research is needed on the reasons of the growing number of young drifters in general, among etnic minorities and specially among girls from etnic minorities. The confrontation between Dutch society and other cultures could be a cause for the growing number of these girls among the young drifters.

- There seem to be a link between social problems and occupational problems. Again, this link appears to cause many more problems for girls from etnic minorities than for other young people. During their training young people are not prepared for the transition into the labour market. More information is needed on the problems caused bt the transition from 'school' to 'society'.

- Decisions taking by young drifters are based on "survival" criteria. They tend to take care of things their own way. Research is needed on the actors that might influence them. Do they role models ?

- The population of the group of young people is changing. It is getting more and more divers: there is a growing numbers of people with mental disorders and under-talented youngsters. A lot of them can not cope with society. The same accounts for the numbers of drugaddicts. The question is whether these people still can be re-socialized? There is a need of cooperation between the different welfare services. There is a need of an integrated approach: boarding houses, psycho-medical care.

The European dimension in guidance

A European dimension in guidance is meant to stimulate mobility of the working force in Europe. The question is whether geographical mobility should be encouraged and stimulated? For the free mobility of the working force, there are many barriers still to be taken.

There are several points still to be investigated:

- Within the framework of European Action Programmes mobility is stimulated through exchange programmes and co-operation agreements:
  - Which group of people benefit most of all the possibilities offered to them?
  - What about opportunities for the most disadvantaged groups in our society? What could they gain with mobility?

  Research should focus on the possibility of introducing different streams in the mobility programmes, were attention is paid for those young people that need special guidance.

Could special mobility programmes help these group of young people and improve their employment prospects at home?

- Does study/working experience abroad help young people in finding a job at home? Is it considered to be an additional asset?

To introduce a European mobility dimension in vocational guidance target-specific material must be developed.

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Arbeidsbureau [Employment Service]
AOB	Adviesbureau bij Opleiding en Beroep [Study and career advisory centre]
AVO	Algemeen voortgezet onderwijs [General secondary education]
BAVO	Basisvorming (in het voortgezet onderwijs) [Basic education (in the secondary school system)]
CITO	Instituut voor Toetsontwikkeling [Institute for the development of tests]
HAVO	Hoger Algemeen Vormend Onderwijs [Senior general secondary education]
HVO	Hulp voor Onbehuisden [Help for the homeless]
JAC	Jongeren Advies Centrum [Advisory centre for young people]
KMBO	Kort Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs [Short secondary vocational education]
LBO	Lager Beroepsonderwijs (now: VBO) [Junior secondary vocational education]
MAVO	Middelbaar Algemeen Vormend Onderwijs [Junior general secondary education]
MBO	Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs [Senior secondary vocational education]
PPI	Psychologisch en Pedagogisch Instituut [Psychological and pedagogical institute]
VBO	Voorbereidend Beroepsonderwijs [Preparatory vocational education]
VSO	Voortgezet Speciaal Onderwijs [Special secondary education]
VWO	Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs [Pre-university education]

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- Policy document of *Stichting Zeezicht* [*'Zeezicht'* boarding house project] (1993)

- *Occupational and Qualification Structures in the field of educational and vocational guidance for young people and adults in Belgium, Ireland, The Netherlands, Portugal* (CEDEFOP DOCUMENT, 1992)

- *Overal thuis? Carrières van zwerfmeiden in Amsterdam* [Home is anywhere? Lifestyles of drifting girls in Amsterdam], Jeanet Hes and Roesja Verhoeven (1992). Study of young female drifters in Amsterdam, who form a separate group within the population of young drifters. The study attempts to describe the main elements in the lifestyles of drifting girls and to throw light on the factors which influence their lives.

- *Thuis op straat* [Home is the street], an exploratory study of young drifters in the inner city of Amsterdam, Dirk Korf and Helen Hoogenhout (1989). This study attempts to form a quantitative and qualitative picture of the group of young drifters in Amsterdam.

- *Werken aan informatie voor jongeren* [Working on information for young people], an exploratory study of the functioning of mediating agencies in the field of youth information, F. van der Linden (1992), carried out in the context of the policy document *Publieksgerichte Maatschappij Informatie* (1990) of the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs. The study sets out to chart the supply of information (production and distribution) to young people

(age group 12-18), presenting a picture of the different fields in which work is done with young people.

- *'Zwerfkrant'* [Drifters' News], a magazine issued periodically by *Stichting Zwerfkinderen Nederland*.

- *Zwervende Jongeren* [Young drifters], J. D. van der Ploeg, J. Gaemers and P. H. Hoogendam (1991). "The study sets out throw light on the ways in which different environmental and personality characteristics contribute to the development of drifting behaviour among young people. It looks in detail at the following three aspects: the current situation of young drifters, the family and the availabilty of help." The study is limited to young people aged between 12 and 21.

INTERVIEWS

- *Jongerenbond* [League of Young People] (JOBO): Patrick van der Horst, executive officer.

- *Nederlands Agrarisch Jongeren Kontakt* [Contact organisation of young people in agriculture] (NAJK): Peter Munters, executive officer.

- *OCTANT Noord-Holland* (Study and career guidance service, North Holland Province), Ron Reeder, project manager.

- *Stichting Zwerfkinderen Nederland* [see above], Frans van de Ven, chairman
This Foundation was set up in 1991 to provide a national framework for activities concerned with young drifters. The Foundation sets itself the task of offering young drifters an outlook on the future by way of facilities based on the threefold principle of *wonen, leren, werken* [accommodation, learning, work]. This means that, in addition to a place to live and help in general, young people are offered support in building a new future for themselves.

- *Stichting Zeezicht* [see above]: 'accommodation, learning and work for young drifters', Stan Ritzer, care manager
This Foundation was set up in 19[illegible] and currently operates the boarding house, **Pension Zeezicht**. *Zeezicht* takes in about 200 young drifters on average each year, many of whom discover a new future for themselves while there.

[Both *Stichting Zwerfkinderen Nederland* and *Stichting Zeezicht* are private initiatives. They work closely with the officially sponsored help agencies in Amsterdam: *Jongeren Advies Centra* - JAC (Youth Counselling Centres), Streetcornerwork, PPI, *Hulp voor Onbehuisden* - HVO (Help for the Homeless). These four mainstream institutions have formed a cooperative link, the *Project Zwerfjongeren Amsterdam* [Amsterdam Young Drifters Project). They involve the two foundations discussed above in their consultations.]

- *Het gemeentelijk Psychologisch en Pedagogisch Instituut* [Community psychological and pedagogical institute] (PPI), project workers
  The PPI aims to prevent dropping out. Dropping out starts with 'bunking off' school. The PPI endeavours to create conditions under which truancy can be prevented. This is the role of the PPI's school contact officers, who consult with school administrations. The aim is to keep children in mainstream education.

- *Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten - VNG* (Association of Dutch Municipalities): F. Jansen, *Onderzoek- en Adviesbureau van de VNG - SGBO* (research and consultancy bureau of the VNG): B. van der Meijden, researcher,

MEETING

- Expert meeting on 15 November 1993 on the situation of young drifters in the Netherlands.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

I. From: *Haagsche Courant*, 13.11.93

Reinate has a roof over her head for seven nights a month, by Marcel Potters

Rotterdam - In 'social detention', as her nine-day stay at police headquarters is so quaintly termed, she only smoked one cigarette a day. Now, just out and feeling relieved, Reinate (17) puffs her way through two in less than half an hour.

On Thursday last week, the police raided her temporary abode. Someone had been threatened with a firearm and had reported the incident. Inside, officers found a bag of drugs *and* Reinate. She was on the run for the umpteenth time and had been recorded as missing.

Reinate's drifting lifestyle began very early in her life. Her parents separated when she was nine. Grammar-school education (*atheneum*) seemed beyond reach, so she tried her luck at a junior secondary vocational-general (LBO-MAVO) school. Looking back, she says that's when things began to go wrong. I bunked off a lot, nobody took much notice. I usually said I had to stay at home, and the teachers believed me. Mostly I just wandered around". After she had picked up the threads again at school, things went wrong at home. She had frequent rows with her sister and her - according to Reinate - over-anxious mother. "I was very aggressive then as well. I started shouting and hitting out over any little thing. When anyone told me I had to do something, I did the opposite. If my mother told me to be home by ten, I turned up at eleven".

The RIAGG system (regional centres for non-residential mental health care) was involved. Her first stay at a children's home, in Haarlem, was short-lived. She moved to a similar institution in Zaandam after three months. Things hardly went any better there. After running away a few times, she returned home. Her mother ended up in hospital, after which an uncle and later a grandmother took her on - without much success.

After a few more sorties, she found shelter at a crisis refuge. There she was given 'room training', a kind of supervised residential care, but that too failed. After yet another crisis refuge, she finally gave up and spent most of the time in a kebab shop or just drifted. At night, she slept at various addresses with her boyfriend.

After they had taken her in the previous week, the police almost burned out the phone trying to find a safe place for Reinate. They tried and failed thirteen times. In consultation with the children's court, it was finally decided simply to keep the girl at the station, or in 'social detention'. A kind of open cell, with the possibility of visits.

Reinate says: "The people in custody there kept saying: why don't you just go home! They couldn't understand what I was doing there. Luckily, the warders were quite nice to me. I could even watch television with them on a couple of evenings".

In the meantime, a furious legal dispute had broken out over her. Counsel D. Vermaat and his colleague M. Bouman considered that Reinate was potential prey for unsavoury characters. Under no circumstances must she be left on the street again, she must be helped, as the children's court had recommended. An action for immediate judgment to secure a good placement was unsuccessful, however. Reinate, who insists that she is not addicted to hard drugs and that she is not a prostitute, does not take kindly to the idea of being cooped up in a closed institution.

She has plenty of plans for the future: "I'm going back to school. And afterwards? After that I'll join the police and follow a course with them. I have already got the information here".

Accommodation for the immediate future is partly settled. For the time being, she will be closely supervised under the project *Aanpak Thuisloze Jeugd Rotterdam* (Action for homeless youth in Rotterdam). On seven nights a month, she can go to a night shelter.

And the other nights? Reinate shrugs her shoulders: "I don't know where I'll sleep right now. Not to worry though, I'll find something".

From: *Haagsche Courant*, 20.11.93

A child of unemployed parents has poor prospects, by Monique van de Ven

> "If you were born to a parent on social security, you will never get a job". And: "The division in society is not based on income but on whether a parent is employed or unemployed". A sociologist is shocked by the findings of her own study.

The Hague - What is really crippling to children is not so much a low family income but the long-term unemployment of parents. It is already certain that a large number of children of low-skilled, unemployed parents will also end up dependent on social security. Education cannot spare children this fate: it just exacerbates the inequality.

Hannie te Grotenhuis is shocked by the findings of her own study. The Hague sociologist won her degree yesterday with a thesis on benefit children.

"If you were born to parents on social security, you will never get permanent employment". That, according to Te Grotenhuis, is the modern variant of the old saying, "if you were born for a penny, you will never be worth a shilling".

There is nothing new in the observation that children from poor backgrounds perform worse at school, on average, than children from so-called higher-class backgrounds. But within the former group, there are much greater differences.

"The division in society is not based on income but on whether parents are employed or unemployed". According to Te Grotenhuis, an underclass has grown up in the Netherlands, consisting of families in a situation without prospects of any kind. When parents have been unemployed for over three years, the effects on the children are "dramatic", says Te Grotenhuis. Short periods of unemployment have no effect on children's chances, but the effects of long-term joblessness are considerable. Certainly when the parents are unskilled or have low qualifications. "Long-term dependence on benefits produces feelings of inferiority, impotence, insecurity and mistrust, which have their repercussions on the children. For, if their children are to perform well at school, parents need to give them support and bring home to them the importance of qualifications. But many parents cannot do that. It is not a question of reluctance or resistance, school is just too remote from these parents", says Te Grotenhuis.

What the children lack at home, according to this investigator, they do not get at school either. "The gap between teacher and child is too wide. The consequence is that the children leave school prematurely, do not get a certificate and hence fail to get work."

Education

Education in the Netherlands may be more accessible than, say, forty years ago, but it has only increased inequality at the lower margins of society. Te Grotenhuis says: "In the past the position of the father in society also determined the future position of the children. After the Second World War, education exacerbated that social inequality still further. Education acquired a key role in the

apportionment of social status. But if that key does not open any door for you, your chances are very slim. Muscle power and practical abilities no longer make up for a lack of education."

According to this investigator, it is not possible to quantify exactly how many benefit children devoid of prospects there are in the Netherlands. "It is also not a question of numbers, the point is that the group with no chances will only grow larger if nothing is done. The benefit children of today are the long-term unemployed of the future; they are already a lost generation. In a society such as ours, can we accept the existence of a permanent underclass which is kept in place by the increasing stringency of entry levels in education and on the labour market?"

More practical training courses and more work for the unskilled could be the start of a solution to the problem, according to Te Grotenhuis.

Target groups analysed in the twelve Member States

B	1)	Young people in Charleroi and Wallonian Brabant
	2)	Young people in Brussels
DK	1)	Locked-in, unemployed young people
	2)	Young people dropping out or changing course in the education system
D		Girls and young women when choosing an occupation
GR	1)	Young people who leave school without completing compulsory education
	2)	Young women with no skills training
E	1)	Young women in the autonomous community of Madrid whose chief activity is domestic work in their own homes
	2)	Young people of both sexes affected by industrial reconversion on the left bank of the Bilbao estuary
F	1)	Young people in initial training
	2)	Young job seekers
IRL		Rural disadvantaged youth Case study 1: North Mayo Case study 2: North-West Connemara
I		Low skilled young people
L	1)	Young people in the 9th class of upper secondary technical education
	2)	Young people with supplementary education in the last year of compulsory schooling
NL		Young drifters
P	1)	Young people in their 9th school year
	2)	Young people who have completed their 9th school year and are attending vocational training schools
	3)	Young people with or without school leaving certificate attending alternative training courses
UK	1)	Young people in full-time employment
	2)	Homeless young people

CEDEFOP - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Determining the need for vocational counselling among different target groups of young people under 28 years of age in the European Community
Vocational guidance needs of homeless young people in the Netherlands - Young drifters -
Anita Wijnaendts van Resandt
EDUCON, European Education & Labour Market Consultants, The Hague

CEDEFOP panorama

Berlin: CEDEFOP - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 1994

1st edition 1994 - 56 pp. - 21,0 x 29,7 cm

EN, NL

free of charge - 5039 EN -

panorama

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Following a brief overview of the career guidance systems in their countries, the authors of the reports describe a number of target groups of young people under 28 years of age, their economic, social and cultural backgrounds and the problems posed by the transition from school to working life.

A total of 21 target groups from the whole spectrum are examined, ranging from young people with favourable conditions for transition to the most disadvantaged.

A comparison is made between the need for career guidance, the demand coming from these groups and the current offer. The conclusions drawn in the summary report (deficit analyses) provide indications for designing future action programmes at EU level.

Particular attention is paid to mobility and the readiness of young people in this age group (PETRA II) throughout the EU Member States.

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National report

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